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Rational Christianity.

To the Editor of the Philadelphia Repository.

The following observations of a learned and pious divine, now with God, appear to me so decisive and unanswerable, on the subject of what is called Rational Christianity, that I have great pleasure in giving them more diffusive circulation than they could obtain from the pamphlet in which they originally appeared. I hope I shall be fortunate enough to procure their insertion in your Repository; they will certainly be read with pleasure, by a number of your subscribers.

E. G.

"THE religion, (says this excellent writer, which has usurped the name of Rational Christianity, is one which has established a criterion of the Deity within itself, arguing from principles of its own assuming, as if from the plenitude of incontrovertible truth.-RATIONAL Christianity !! !- I thought our Christianity had a higher title -I thought it had been a Revealed Christianity. The world never yet heard of the promulgation of any other Christianity-Whither, then is the philosopher gone astray ? Or what is it that he means, when he makes use of the word Christianity ?-Does he mean that system of Religion which is derived to us from Revelation in the Gospel? If so, what occasion is there for the epithet rational, so studiously, so invidiously applied ? Surely there cannot be two species of Christianity-the one rational, and the other absurd and irrational. -There cannot be a rational revealed Christianity, and an irrational revealed Christianity. Why then is it necessary to harp so incessantly on the words "Ra-tional Christianity?" Why express a wish to see Christianity settled on a rational foundation, " that it may be worthy of God?" Is not then Christianity built on a rational foundation in the Gospel? Will it not be worthy of God, until it shall have been pruned and ameliorated by philosophical exertions? Descend, thou child of pride, descend from those towering heights to which self-conceit, and the wisdom of thine own imagination, hath exalted thee!

" We are all of us, though settled upon this lower earth, connected with the invisible world, the world of spirits. Of this we neither do know, nor can know, any thing, while we are in the body, otherwise than by information. The utmost stretch of the human mind will not reach to the throne of God; neither is the world of spirits subject to our sensible perceptions. Whatever knowledge, therefore, we may have of them, it must be all derived to us from information ; and, if this information be fully authenticated to us to come from God and the invisible world, what can we, what shall we, dare to urge against its truth? What signify all the workings and contortions of our minds, when exerted against that information which is authenticated to us to come from heaven? Are our minds the efficients of a revelation, or does it depend upon them? Must God and the invisible world be peculiarly such as our minds appoint them to be? How involved in the darkness of philosophical error is he who dares maintain that God can only be such as an ill-informed mind chuses to determine he should be! If God and the world of spirits existed only at the creation of our minds, no idea of them would be admissible, but such as our minds should adjudge to them. But so entirely is the contrary position true, that they have their existence without us, and antecedently to any idea that we may have of them. When, therefore, the knowledge of them is communicated to us, on the certain grounds of an undoubted revelation from heaven, our minds are altogether unoperative, and are only the receptacles of that information which Revelation communicates to us; and, therefore, we have nothing to do but to acquiesce implicitly, being incompetent to determine any thing but with regard to the reality of the revelation. The mind has no employ-

ment for itself on such subjects but what consists in the acknowledgment of the truth -beyond this, the mind hath no powers whereby to determine. Powers it has, sufficient to determine whether the communication is from Heaven or not; but the thing communicated lies all beyond its reach. What may be the constitution of things spiritual, otherwise than as we are informed, we know not: but concerning ourselves we can pronounce determinately. We can determine physically, that it is impossible for us to tread the air, as if we were upon a solid. We can pronounce with certainty, that through a solid we cannot pass without being impeded. We know that we are limited in respect of place, and that we cannot be in more than one, at one and at the same time. These with many other things, we can determine with infallible certainty and assurance, because we know the nature of man, But, when we are told any thing concerning the existing nature of God and heaven, we can determine nothing beyond what we are toldall beyond this is involved in clouds and darkness. To pronounce, therefore, with regard to what we are told on the authority of Revelation, that it is irrational or impossible, must surely be the suggestion of insanity, not of philosophy. We have no Christianity, no Christian religion, but what is derived to us from the Sacred Scriptures; and a religion derived from any other source is not Christianity .-While the promoters, therefore, of what is called rational Christianity, are pluming themselves on the derivation of their religion from rational principles independent of Revelation, they are convicting themselves of absurdity and folly ; for the Holy Gospel is not founded on the wisdom of man, but on the wisdom of God."

MAXIM.

CONTEMPT is a kind of gangrene, which, if it seizes one part of a character, corrupts all the rest by degrees.

FILIAL PIETY REWARDED.

The following little history is related by an ingenious and polite foreign author, who asserts the truth of it, and that the parties are still living in France.

IN a great sea port, in one of the most distant provinces of that kingdom, there lived a merchant, who had carried on trade with equal honour and prosperity, till he was turned of 50 years of age; and then, by a sudden series of unexpected and unavoidable losses, found himself unable to comply with his engagements; and his wife and children, in whom he placed his principal tappiness, reduced to such a situation as doubled his distress.

His sole resource in this sad situation. was the reflection, that upon the strictest review of his own conduct, nothing either of iniquity or imprudence appeared. He thought it best, therefore, to repair to Paris, in order to lay a true state of his affairs before his creditors, that, being convinced of his honesty, they might be induced to pity his misfortunes, and allow him a reasonable space of time to settle his affairs. He was kindly received by some, and very civilly by all, from whence he conceived great hopes, which he communicated to his family. But these were speedily dashed by the cruelty of his principal creditor, who caused him to be seized and sent to a prison.

As soon as this melancholy event was known in the country, his eldest son, who was turned of 19, listening only to the dictates of filial piety, came post to Paris, and threw himself at the feet of this obdurate creditor, to whom he painted the distress of his family in the most pathetic terms, but without effect. At length, in the greatest agony of mind, he said, "Sir, since you think nothing can compensate for your loss but a victim, let your resentment devolve upon me-let me spffer instead of my father-and the miseries of a prison will seem light in procuring the liberty of a parent, to console the sorrows of the distracted and dejected family that I have left behind me. Thus, Sir, you will satisfy your vengeance without sealing their irretrievable ruin." And there his tears and sighs stopped his ntterance.

His father's creditor beheld him upon his knees, in this condition, for a full quarter of an hour. He then sternly bade him rise, and sit down, which he obeyed. The gentleman then walked from one corner of the room to the other, in great agitation of mind, for about the same space of time. At length, throwing his arms about the young man's neck, "I find," said he, "there is yet something, more valuable than money: I have an only daughter, for whose fate I have the utmost anxiety. I am resolved to fix it. In marrying

you she must be happy. Go, carry your father's discharge, ask his consent, bring him instantly hither, and let us bury, in the joy of this alliance, all remembrance of what has formerly happened."—
Thus the generous gratitude of the son relieved the calamity of the worthy father. The man who had considered wealth and happiness as synonymous terms, was freed from that error, and Providence vindicated the manner of its proceeding, by thus bringing light out of darkness;—and, through a short scene of misery, rewarded a virtuous family with lasting peace, in the enjoyment of that prosperity which they so well deserved.

Natural History.

ON THE VARIETY AND MOVEMENT OF ANIMALS.

From Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty.

SPEAKING of the human form, and the art of man to give it grace and beauty, Mr. Hogarth says, "Thus again you see, the more variety we pretend to give to our trifling movements, the more confused and unornamental the forms become; nay, chance but seldom helps them. How much the reverse are Nature's! the greater the variety her movements have, the more beautiful are the parts that cause them.

"The finny race of animals, as they have fewer motions than other creatures, so are their forms less remarkable for beauty. It is also to be noted of every species, that the handsomest of each move best; birds of a clumsy make seldom fly well, nor do lumpy fish glide so well through the water, as those of a neater make; and beasts of the most elegant form always excel in speed; of this the horse and the greyhound are beautiful examples; and even among themselves the most elegantly made, seldom fail of being the swiftest.

"The war-horse is more equally made for strength, than the race-horse, which surplus of power in the former, if supposed added to the latter, as it would throw more weight into improper parts for the business of mere speed, so of course it would lesson in some degree that admirable quality, and partly destroy that delicate fitness of his make; but then a quality in movement, superior to that of speed would be given to him by the addition, as he would be rendered thereby more fit to move with ease in such varied or graceful directions, as are so delightful to the eye in the carriage of the fine managed war-horse; and as at the same time, something stately and graceful would be added to his figure, which before could only be said to have an elegant neatness. This noble creature stands foremost amongst

brutes; and it is but consistent with Nature's propriety, that the most useful animal in the brute creation should be thus signalized also for the most beauty.

"Yet, properly speaking," adds our author, " no living creatures are capable of moving in such truly varied and graceful directions, as the human species; and it would be needless to say how much superior in beauty their forms and textures likewise are. And surely, also, after what has been said relating to figure and motion, it is plain and evident that nature has thought fit to make beauty of proportion, and beauty of movement, necessary to each other; so that the observation before made on animals, will hold equally good with regard to man, i. e. that he who is most exquisitely well proportioned, is most capable of exquisite movements, such as ease in grace in deportment, or in dancing."

AN EXTRAORDINARY HEN.

MRS. LENDON, a gentlewowan in England, particularly attached to investigating . the operations of nature, had a fancy to attempt the hatching of a fowl by the heat of her own bosom; to that end, she took a new-laid egg of a favourite breed, and having placed it in a flannel pocket, constantly kept it between her breasts for the space of six weeks, being ever careful in the fight to secure to it with her in bed that portion of warmth necessary to perfect existence during incubation. At length the time came to relieve the infant chicken from the brittle cell of its confinement : the moment was perceptible by the appearance of its little beak through the large end of the shell; but lest an injury might be communicated by over haste, Mrs. Lendon frequently applied a drop of soft water to the bill of her helpless charge, till it had strength to burst the walls of its confinement ; when, to the great satisfaction of its kind foster parent, a fine strong hen bird came forth in all respects as lively as if produced by the warmth and care of its natural mother. But Mrs. L. considering her task not fully accomplished, made it a nest of wool by day, and constantly took it to her bed by night, still feeding it with that farinacious tood most likely to accelerate its growth and spirits; and by this conduct, in the usual time, it became a fowl of perfect growth and beauty. It is at this moment a fine hen of three years old, and has laid Mrs. L. upwards of 300 eggs; brought up several broods of chickens, and one of ducks.

The singular character of this hen, which Mrs L. calls Fanny, is most worthy the attention of the curious in natural studies. Her domestications are numerous; she prefers the house, and the company of her kind friend, to that of her own species, and will, if permitted, follow or accompany her mistress wherever she goes. Fanny apparentunderstands her language, and has a mode of making herself an entertaining companion to Mrs. L. diverting her lonely hours, &c. In breif, this extraordinary bird possesses so many valuable qualities, as human nature might not be degraded to imitate. She exhibits the purest affection, possesses a true sense of gratitude, and very often refutes a long standing vulgar error, that "Man is the only reasoning creature."

THE PIOUS ROGUE.

..... "Have you aught more whereof your conscience should be purged?" said the venerable Father Anselm, addressing a kneeling sinner at the confessional. "Yes. holy father," replied the penitent, " I have committed the foul sin of theft-I have stolen this watch, will you accept of it?" "Me !" exclaimed the pious priest; " me ! receive the fruit of thy villainy !- how daest thou tempt me to the commission of so abominable a crime? Go instantly, return the watch to its owner."—"I have already offered it to him," replied the culprit, "and he refused to receive it; therefore holy father, I beseech you to take it."-" Peace, wretch !" rejoined Anselm, "you should have repeated the offer."-" I did repeat it, holy father, and he persisted in the refusal."-" Then I must absolve thee from the sin thou hast committed." The honest fellow had scarcely departed, when the astonished priest discovered that his own watch had been stolen from the place where it had been deposited, near the confessionary!!!

New Novel.

Extract from a Novel, entitled MORDAUNT, or Sketches of Life, Characters, and Manners, in various countries—written by Dr. Moore, author of "Zelucco," and "Edward,"

The Honourable John Mordaunt to Colonel
Summers.

HIDALGOS OF BADAGOS.

THE streets of Badagos are narrow, filthy and generally silent—no sign of industry of any kind. I observed however, some men with cloaks around their shoulders, each of whom stood before a separate door, and seemed to have no other object but to gaze at the passengers.

"Pray what class of men are those?" said I to the Biscayan; "they seem too idle to be tradesmen."

"You conjecture right," replied he;—
they would be highly affronted if they
imagined you could suspect them of exercising any kind of trade."

"They are men of independent fortune then," said I.

"Almost their only property," said he,
is the wretched house they inhabit, which
being transmitted from father to son, is in-

alienable, and constitutes what in this country is called an Hidalgo, or Hijo-de-Algo (the son of somebody); they would consider it as a degradation to follow any mechanical employment."

"How are they prevented from starving?" " Why they are not prevented from what you would call starving in England," repiled he, - "but I will tell you how they prolong their life .- Observe that man going from his own door, with something under his cloak; you will see him stop at the private door of that magnificent building, which is a convent, and one of the richest establishments in this province: he carries under his cloak a vessel, into which he re-ceives an allotted portion of broth, with vegetables and meat of different kinds, which he carries back for the support of his family; and the same is regularly done by a number of these Hidalgos every day. Those who are thus served at the private door of the convent, are called the bashful or gentlemen beggars. As for the others, I do not well know how to denominate them. They cannot be called the poorer sort, and still less the meaner; for nothing can be meaner than what I have related of these Hidalgos; but as the others are not Hidalgos (or sons of somebody) we may distinguish them by the appellation of " the sons of nobody:" all of that class, then, receive alms at the public gate."

"It seems surprising," said I, "that men who are ashamed to work for their bread, should not be ashamed to beg for it; for you may call him as bashful as you please but the man struts to the convent with as stately a step as if he were the proprietor of the whole building."

"As for his strut," rejoined the Biscayan, "that belongs to him as an Hidalgo. With regard to men's being less ashamed to beg, than to work, I must inform you that begging has been considered as an honourable employment ever since mendicant friarswere established in Spain."

"Since the Spaniards are so prone to follow the example of friars," said I, it is a pity that some societies of working friars are not established."

"Whether it proceeds from the difficulty of finding materials for such an establishment," replied the Biscayan, smiling, "or from some other cause, nothing of that kind has been founded hitherto: but the other establishment has gained to such a degree, that you will find men of high rank, in various parts of this country, begging from door to door, for the benefit of one convent or another. It is thought a most meritorious occupation. Had you been at Badagos a week ago, you would have seen the Confraternity of Charity, as it is called, into which none but noblemen and gentlemen of fortune are admitted, begging all over the town to defray certain expences for the benefit of a criminal who was executed that morning."

"Suppose," said I, for we may suppose any thing, however improbable, "that a set of industrious working friars were really to appear, do you imagine that the nobility would be as ready to follow their example, as they have shewn themselves to imitate the indolent begging fraternity?"

"That is a question," replied he, "that it is needless to answer, because the case, you suppose, will assuredly never occur; but on this you may rely, that no such idleness nor beggary is seen in Biscay. My countryman are industrious, because they are free, and allowed to reap and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

"You must not imagine that in every part of Spain, the same lazy beggarly disposition is attached to the inhabitants that you have seen here. In Catalonia, for example, the people are in general industrious: that province is well cultivated: not only the plains, but even the mountains, to the very tops of which the inhabitants carry baskets of earth for that purpose. As the Catalonians do not enjoy the same privileges with the inhabitants of Biscay, their industry cannot be imputed to the same cause. But there are no more convents in Catalonia than what seem necessary for the aid of the parochial clergy in the offices of religion. If there were the same establishments for the feeding of beggarly Hidalgos, and a lazy peasantry that you see here, there would in all probabilty be as little industry."

Anecdotes.

At a certain inn where there is an ordinary, a Gentleman, going to dine in the neighbourhood, being rather too early, went in and called for a pint of porter: the dinner was just going on the table, and but few people there to partake, made the landlord reckon short on that day's profit. He pres-sed the Gentleman to taste the beef, as being remarkably fine, which he did, by literally taking a mouthful: however, when he was departing, and paying for his porter, was told there was 18. 6d for eating, as it was the constant plan of the house to charge that sum, for eating more or less. He paid it, but could not help thinking it a gross imposition, and determined to play the landlord a joke in return; he therefore made inquiry, and finding a complete gormandizer, dressed him rather decently, and took him, together with a friend, to enjoy the joke. They were seated, and the devourer quickly dispatched four plates full, and was proceeding to pick the bones of the joint; at which the astonished landlord broke out in an ejaculation, and exclaimed, "that he should not have enough for his servant's dinner;" which caused the Gentlemen to laugh, and led to the discovery. The landlord remembered the charge of 18. 6d. for the mouthful, and declared he would not take any thing for the day's entertainment, provided they never brought the man again.

A husband having frequently had recourse to the old-fashioned mode of mending the manners of his wife by the striking expedient of a stick, the latter had recourse to the following whimsical mode of repaying him with interest.—One morning finding him locked unusually fast in the arms of Morphieus, she contrived to sew him up in the bed clothes, and in that helpless state belaboured him so heartily with a twig about three inches that she compelled him to enter into a solemn treaty of peace, as a preliminary step to the preservation of his bones!

POETRY.

CRAZY JANE.

The following lines were written in consequence of a Laly having, in her walks, met with a poor mad woman, known by the appellation of Crazy Jane, at whose appearance the Lady was much alarmed.

WHY, fair maid, in every feature,
Are such signs of fear express'd?
Can a wandering wietched creature,
With such terror fill thy breast?
Do my phrenzied looks alarm thee?
Trust me sweet,—thy feats' are vain;
Not for kingdoms would I haim thee!
Shun not, then, poor crazy Jane.

Dost thou weep to see my anguish?

Mark me—and avoid my woe!

When men flatter, sigh and languish,

Think them false—I found them so.

For I lov'd—oh! so sincerely,

None could ever love again!

But the you'd I lov'd so dearly,

Stole the wits of crazy Jane.

Fondly my young heart receiv'd him,
Which was doom'd to love but one.
He sigh'd, he vow'd, and I believ'd him,
He was false—and I' on undone.
From that hour, has reason never
Held her empire o'er my brain;
Henry fled—with him for ever
Fled the wits of crazy Jane.

New forlorn, and broken hearted,
And with phrenzied thoughts beset,
On that spot where last we parted,
On that spot where first we met.
Still I sing my love-lornditty,
Still I s'owly pace the plain:
Whilst each passer-by, in pity,
Cries—God help thee, crazy Jane.

THE JOLLY FRIAR.

A jolly fat Friar lov'd liquor, good store,
And he had drank stoutly at supper,
He mounted his horse, in the night, at the door,
And sat with his face to the crupper.

"Some rogue," quoth the friar, "quite dead to remorse,
"Some thief, whom a halter will throttle.

"Some scoundrel has cut off the head of my horse,

Wailst I was engag'd with the bottle."
Which went gluggity, gluggity, glug.

The tail of his steed pointed South on the dale,
'Twosthe friar's road home, straight and level;
But, when spur'd, a horse follows his nose, not his tail,
So he scamper'd due North like a d—1.

This new mode of docking," the fat friar said,

"And 'tis cheap—for he never can eat off his head
"While I amengas'd with the bottle!"
Which goes gluggity, gluggity, glug.

The steed made a stop—in the pond he had got;—
He was rather for drinking than grazing;
Quoth the friar—" 'tis.strange headless horses should
trot!

"But to drink with their tails is amazing!
"Turning round to find whence this phenomenon rose,
In the pond fell this son of a pottle,

Quoth he, "The head's found, for I'm under his nose,
"I wish, I were over the bottle!"
Which goes gluggity, gluggity, glug.

IMPROMPTU ON THE LEAFLESS SEASON.

SO hard the times, so bare, so cold.

That Nature sorrow shews;

Per stripp'd of all her pride, behold,

Poor Nature naked goes.

For the Philadelphia Repository.

OBSERVATIONS ON FEMALE POLI-

Written by a TOUNG LADT, student in the YOUNG LA-DIES' ACADEMY OF PHILADELPHIA, being one of the weeklythemes for exercising their talents in composition."

MANY females render themselves unamiable, and indeed ridiculous, by interesting themselves in politics. They certainly are not aware of the consequences. They do not consider that an attachment to this subject, will ruin their disposition, destroy their peace of mind, and excite contempt and disgust.

If a young lady is ambitious of gaining the esteem of the world, she must carefully avoid such topics of conversation, as are alone proper for the other sex, and which, if carried too far, will even cause them to be shunned and despised. I am convinced that most ladies fall into this fatal error from mere thoughlessness.—Having no taste for study and unengaged in any suitable employment, they listen to political disputations until they get a slight acquaintance with the subjects discussed, and then commence reformers of the state, and wonderful politicians. By degrees the practice of controversy becomes more pleasing, and they gradually love sight of all pursuits which are adapted for them.

I would beg leave to advise all young ladies, and my dear Classmates in particular, never to let politics engross their minds. I do not think we are or ought to be capable

of judging on political questions.

Many young ladies who talk very much and very loud about Democrat and Aristocrat, are ignorant of the meaning of the terms. It has been said "that the tongue is is like a race-horse, which runs the faster the less weight it carries," and I think the remark particularly just, when applied to the declamation of political females.

We should cultivate the amiable and

We should cultivate the amiable and peaceful arts of life, and above all a good disposition and virtuous affections. If we attend strictly to those studies and domestic duties proper for females, our own lives will be made happy, and we shall enjoy the friendship and confidence of the virtuous.

 Every young lady in the Academy who has made a suitaby proficiency in other branches of education, is obliged to compose weekly, an essay upon some given subject.

On the Advantages of a Good Education, and of Gratitude to Preceptors.

LIFE often proves a fatal gift: the favors of fortune are frail and dangerous; but a good education is an inestimable benefit, which can of itself give a value to all others, and the place of which nothing else can supply.

In adversity, a good education furnishes honourable and certain resources, and it equally teaches us to enjoy prosperity. Who can fix bounds to the gratitude due to a preceptor who has fulfilled all the duties of one? what sentiments, what conduct towards him can acquit the immense debt; can repay that unfinited attention, those solicitudes, those labours, that activity, that vigilance, those unremitting cares of which you were, during so many years, the object!

If gratitude ought to engrave on the memory, in indelible characters, the remembrance of the slightest benefit received, how

is it possible to forget that long series of obligations so closely linked together, the happy influence of which extends over all the future life!

Every thing must tend to recal to the virtuous pupil the idea of his first instuctor, since all his actions retrace the precepts he received from him; ingratitude can only find place in the bosom of the depraved ; he forgets his instructor because he has long ceased to remember his lessons; he forgets that tender friend of his infancy and of his youth; that tutelary genius who so long watched over him, as the impious forget their Creator; he endeavours to banish the recollection because it is become troublesome to him, because it overwhelms him with self reproach; the confused remembrance of those precepts he had neglected, disturb and affright him; in order to stifle his remorse, and give a loose to his passions, he must begin by being ungrateful: the good feel none of this; they know the value of early and virtuous instructions, they alone reap the fruit of them.

Yet I do know it possible to cherish and preserve the virtues, yet to neglect and forget the source from which they were drawn! I know it possible!—yet scarce can comprehend how such a possibility can exist.

Oh, inexplicable young man! you who are indebted to a good education for virtues, information, accomplishments, how have you been able to efface from your memory that benefactor whom all these ought to point out to you as the author of each of these advantages! Are you in adversity? who furnished you with resources to baffle its power, has given you that courage which supports you, that strength, moral and physical, which enables you to meet undismayed, every fatigue of body, every pang of mind? who was that vigilant, that tenderly attached guide who conducted you into the road sacred to virtue, who cleared the entrance, smoothed the way, and for you strewed all its paths with flowers? who taught you to despise luxury and effeminate softness? to whom do you owe the development of your reason, the expansion of your mind? that memory so richly stored, by whose care was it thus cultivated? how well has that memory been able to retain all the various words, of different languages, all the interesting facts of history ?-ah! to friendship alone is it unfaithful !- If your probity, your brilliant accomplishments have had any effect in rendering you happy, is it to your birth or to blind chance you are indebted for them? Do you enjoy the luxury of doing good, of succouring the unfortunate? Oh! in those moments so exquisitely sweet, how is it that your heart does not recal the image of that friend who first conducted your steps to the humble roof of poverty! who first rendered you susceptible of the delicious emotions of compassion! who first taught you the enjoyments of goodness and benevolence!

That you may feel in its full force all that you owe to this guide, instructor, and friend, suppose for a moment that the care of your infancy and youth had been confided to mercenary hands; suppose that flattery had corrupted your judgment, that effeminacy had enervated your frame, that no principles had been instilled, no talents cultivated, no instructions been 'estowed on

what would you have to-